

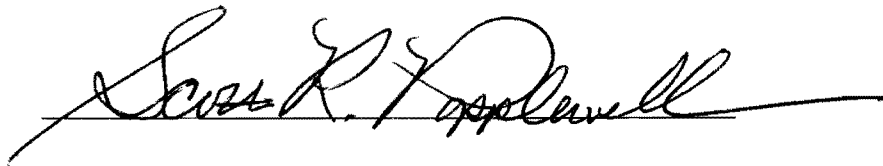
# **Multicultural Education**

An Honors Thesis (HONRS 499)

by

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A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Scott R. Popplewell", written over a horizontal line.

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November 2005

Graduation Date:  
December 2005

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First, I would like to thank Dr. Joel Shrock for his assistance as I selected a thesis topic. His guidance sparked my interest in multicultural education and inspired me to begin the project of creating this website.

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Next, I would like to thank my step-father Dr. John Medley for reviewing and commenting on my work. His enthusiasm compelled me to persevere and do my best.

After that, I would like to thank Adam Russ for his time and effort in helping me design and publish this website. Without his patience, understanding and confidence in my abilities, this website would never have been created.

Finally, I would like to thank all of my friends and family for their endless support and encouragement.

## Abstract

Our world is comprised of a multitude of cultures. In order to provide their students with the best possible education, schools in the United States must not only educate their students about the American culture, but of the numerous other cultures as well. Schools must provide their students the means to attain knowledge and appreciation of every culture in our world. It is a complicated task that many schools have chosen to undertake with multicultural education. This thesis project serves to explain and thus provide a conduit facilitating dialogue on and understanding of multicultural education. More specifically, it describes the definitions, characteristics, benefits, teaching approaches, guidelines and necessary steps to attain multicultural education.

## Rationale

Immigration and ethnic diversity are key components of the American experience. Throughout history, the United States accepted more immigrants, from more places around the world, than any other nation (Cohen, 1986). As a result, the ethnic mixture of the United States has become increasingly varied. In the year 2005, this trend remains and continues to grow.

In order to gain a better understanding of the ethnic diversity prevalent in our world, consider the following. According to information extrapolated from the United Nations demographic data as of October 1999, maintaining current human ratios, if the Earth's population shrank to a population of 100 females and males, it would appear like this:

- There would be 61 Asians, 12 Europeans, 14 North and South Americans and 13 Africans.
- Of these 100 individuals, 70 would be nonwhite and 30 would be white.
- Among these 100 people, 70 would be non-Christian and 30 would be Christian.

(Steiner, 2001)

The immigration of various cultures and the increasing ethnic diversity in the United States caused a dilemma for American educators. How could educators teach the core values of American heritage as well as fairly and accurately depict the rich ethnic diversity of the United States? The answer to this question was multicultural education. Multicultural education was the solution to assure that students in the United States become equally aware of their own heritage as well as the various cultures throughout the world. Since it was first introduced, multicultural education has evolved into one of the most widely endorsed forms of instruction.

Multicultural education is a multifaceted idea that requires investigation and analysis to completely understand. As a future educator, it is a concept I desire to become fully aware of. It

is my goal to provide all of my students with the best education possible; to expose them to a broad range of ideas that will inspire them to reach their full potential. By embracing the ideals of multicultural education, I am capable of reaching this goal.

I chose to examine six essential aspects of multicultural education: definitions, characteristics, benefits, teaching approaches, guidelines and the steps necessary to achieve multicultural education. By researching these six aspects, I will build a firm foundation of knowledge on this topic; a foundation which will provide me with an extensive awareness I can apply in the classroom. Not only will I comprehend exactly what multicultural education is, I will understand why it should be implemented and how to implement it.

The purpose of this website is to share the information I gained about multicultural education with educators, administrators and the general public. In addition to expressing the information in a way that is easy to understand, the website is organized in a format that is easy to navigate. Those who visit this website may decide to view all six aspects of multicultural education I chose to examine or may select only the aspects that interest them. I genuinely hope that all who visit my website will gain knowledge about multicultural education and become inspired to implement this form of instruction in their surrounding schools.

## Knowledge Gained

From the time I first began my senior honors thesis project until the time I completed it, I learned a great deal of information. Before this project, I was only vaguely familiar with the concept of multicultural education. It was a topic that had been mentioned in one or two of my elementary education methods courses; however it was not a topic discussed in depth. My personal research for this project provided me with the opportunity to expand my knowledge on multicultural education. Of the seven different aspects of multicultural education that I examined, the most fascinating pieces of information I gathered from are the various teaching approaches supporting multicultural education and the transformational process that occurs when a multicultural curriculum is implemented. Becoming aware of the specific steps I must take in order to observe the benefits of multicultural education motivated me to take action. In fact, as I completed my student teaching assignment, I implemented certain multicultural techniques as I taught. I introduced my students to the Spanish language then began directing various activities involving numbers, days of the week and months of the year in Spanish, exposed them to the different opinions and beliefs of all cultures during discussions and modeled a tolerant, open-minded, accepting attitude toward diverse cultures.

In addition to the knowledge I gained concerning multicultural education, my awareness of web design and publishing similarly grew. In order to create a professional website that would appeal to others, I had to become familiar with Macromedia Dreamweaver, Adobe Photoshop, Hyper Text Markup Language (HTML) and Cascading Style Sheets (CSS). My new knowledge of Macromedia Dreamweaver allowed me to design the layout, insert my research and preview each page before it was published. Adobe Photoshop allowed me to create the unique child-like text for my links and banners. Because of the uniqueness of the font, the

majority of people do not have the ability to view this text on their computers. By using Adobe Photoshop I was able to create graphics of the text, rather than rely on individuals having the font on their computer. With the aid of Macromedia Dreamweaver, I used CSS and HTML to design the colors, fonts, layout and formatting on my website.

As I progress into my career, with a degree in elementary education, I will frequently utilize the information I gained from my senior honors thesis project. My understanding of multicultural education will enable me to implement effective teaching strategies in the classroom to provide my students with the best possible education. My knowledge of web and graphic design will also be useful to me as a professional educator while I develop various lessons and activities that require the use of such programs.



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Education is the most powerful weapon which  
you can use to change the world.

-Nelson Mandela

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Multicultural education is an idea which originated in the 1960s at the beginning of the civil rights movement. Since then it has been transformed, refocused, reconceptualized and has remained in a constant state of evolution in theory and in practice. In the 1990s, multicultural education emerged again with renewed strength as the United States was forced to examine its cultural heritage and acknowledge its responsibility to meet the educational needs of a society that is not monocultural, but is a "melting pot" created by a synthesis of several different cultures. By 1991, more than half of the states adopted a policy to implement multicultural education and several schools launched some form of multiculturalism into their curricula.

Yet what is multicultural education? It is a concept that means different things to different people. Some describe multicultural education as a shift in curriculum while others consider it to be a change in classroom climate or teaching styles. A number of people focus on systemic matters as others go

even further promoting educational change as part of a larger societal transformation. Within these interpretations, some highlight the cultural characteristics of diverse groups while others stress social problems, political power and the reallocation of economic resources. Some restrict their focus to people of color; however, others include all major groups that are in any way different from mainstream Americans. A few people limit multicultural education to characteristics that are present in the local schools, but others initiate school reform in all settings regardless of their characteristics.

Despite the abundance of varying conceptualizations of multicultural education, they have certain characteristics in common. All conceptions share the four following ideals: (1) they are based upon a common set of assumptions, (2) they evolve out of common concerns, (3) they contain common guidelines for action and (4) they share a desire to make cultural pluralism and ethnic diversity integral parts of the educational process (Gay, 1994).

More specifically, each definition of multicultural education upholds that:

- Every student must have an equal opportunity to achieve to her or his full potential.
- Every student must be prepared to competently participate in an increasingly intercultural society.
- Teachers must be prepared to effectively facilitate learning for every individual student, no matter how culturally similar or different from oneself.
- Schools must be active participants in ending oppression of all types.



- Educators, activists and others must take a more active role in reexamining all educational practices and how they affect the learning of all students.

The following is a list of the most common definitions of multicultural education:

- Any set of processes by which schools work with rather than against oppressed groups (Sleeter, 1992).
- An idea, an educational reform movement and a process intended to change the structure of educational institutions so that all students have an equal chance to achieve academic success (Gay, 1994).
- A philosophy that stresses the importance, legitimacy and vitality of ethnic and cultural diversity in shaping the lives of individuals, groups and nations (Gay, 1994).
- A reform movement that changes all components of the educational enterprise, including its underlying values, procedural rules, curricula, instructional materials, organizational structure and governance policies to reflect cultural pluralism (Gay, 1994).
- An ongoing process that requires long term investment of time and effort as well as carefully planned and monitored actions (Banks & Banks, 1993).
- The act of institutionalizing a philosophy of cultural pluralism within the educational system that is grounded in principles of equality, mutual respect, acceptance and understanding and moral commitment to social justice (Baptiste, 1979).



- Structuring educational priorities, commitments and processes to reflect the cultural pluralism of the United States and to ensure the survival of group heritages that make up society, following American democratic ideals (AACTE, 1973 and Hunter, 1974).
- An education free of inherited biases, with freedom to explore other perspectives and cultures, inspired by the goal of making children sensitive to the plurality of the ways of life, different modes of analyzing experiences and ideas and ways of looking at history found throughout the world (Parekh, 1986).
- A humanistic concept based on the strength of diversity, human rights, social justice and alternative lifestyles for all people, it is necessary for a quality education and includes all efforts to make the full range of cultures available to students; it views a culturally pluralistic society as a positive force and welcomes differences as vehicles for better understanding the global society (Grant, 1977).
- An approach to teaching and learning based upon democratic values that foster cultural pluralism; in its most comprehensive form, it is a commitment to achieving educational equality, developing curricula that build understanding about ethnic groups and combating oppressive practices (Bennett, 1990).
- A type of education that is concerned with various groups in American society that are victims of discrimination and assaults because of their unique cultural characteristics; it includes studying such key concepts as prejudice, identity, conflicts, and

alienation and modifying school practices and policies to reflect an appreciation for ethnic diversity in the United States (Banks, 1977).

- Acquiring knowledge about various groups and organizations that oppose oppression and exploitation by studying the artifacts and ideas that emanate from their efforts (Seizmore, 1981).
- Policies and practices that show respect for cultural diversity through educational philosophy, staffing composition and hierarchy, instructional materials, curricula and evaluation procedures (Frazier, 1977; Grant, 1977).
- A comprehensive school reform and basic education for all students that challenges all forms of discrimination, permeates instruction and interpersonal relations in the classroom and advances the democratic principles of social justice (Nieto, 1992).

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Regardless of the specific approach chosen to be implemented, all multicultural programs share a common set of general characteristics. The following is a description of certain characteristics that every program should include:

- Pedagogy must acknowledge and address all learning styles providing every student with an equal opportunity to reach their full potential as learners.
- Instructional techniques must be varied.
- Instruction and materials must be free of invisibility, stereotyping, selectivity, imbalance, unreality, fragmentation, isolation and bias.
- Instructional materials must be varied.
- Images and content in bulletin boards, posters and other constantly-visible objects

must represent diverse subjects.

- Content must be complete and accurate, replacing any distorted and biased images.
- Content must be comprehensive, analytical and comparative.
- Content must recognize the contributions and perspectives of all groups including those who have traditionally been excluded.
- Content must be presented from a variety of diverse perspectives.
- Content must be relevant for the students.
- Content must include historical backgrounds, languages, cultural characteristics, contributions, critical events, significant individuals and social, political and economic conditions of various majority and minority ethnic groups in the United States.
- Content must address all forms of oppression.
- Curriculum must be language-sensitive.
- Curriculum must promote respect for common values and distinctive ways of life.
- Curriculum must clarify ethnic attitudes and values.
- Curriculum must develop greater self-understanding, positive self-concept and pride in one's own ethnic identity.
- Curriculum must emphasize critical and creative thinking, learning skills and deep social awareness as well as facts and figures.
- Curriculum must facilitate instruction and

learning of ethnically diverse students.

- Curriculum must increasingly contribute to the proactive transformation of society and the practice of social justice and equity.
- Curriculum must regularly be assessed for completeness, accuracy and bias.
- Students must be actively involved in both the teaching and learning processes.
- Students must be recognized as valuable multicultural resources when relevant.
- Students must learn to appreciate and respect cultural diversity.
- Students must learn that "different" does not indicate "inferior."
- Students must learn how to understand and interact with people who are ethnically, racially and culturally different from themselves.
- Students must continuously be educated about social justice issues and civic responsibility.
- Educators must be prepared to foster a positive classroom climate for all students.
- Educators must have a thorough understanding of how culture affects learning styles, teaching behaviors and educational decisions.
- Educators must remain in a constant process of self-examination and transformation in regard to their own prejudices, biases and assumptions.

- Educators and administrators must be held accountable for all practices that may appear discriminatory.
- The entire community must be integrated into the program as resources.

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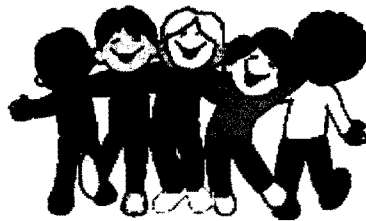
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Multicultural education is a relatively new concept in the field of educational practices. From the time of its development in the 1960s until now, nearly all research has been dedicated to defining the conceptual parameters, documenting cultural characteristics and designing examples of curricula and instructional strategies for classroom application. Thus, the results concerning the effects of multicultural education are few. There are, however, several strong verifications of the overall benefits of multicultural education. Although the research is rather preliminary, tentative and inconclusive, it indicates the following:

- The racial, ethnic and gender attitudes of students can be positively affected by curriculum and instructional interventions.
- Social and academic skills improve significantly when teaching strategies are modified to match the cultural characteristics and learning styles of diverse ethnic groups.
- A reduction of fear, ignorance and personal detachment occur when interacting and communicating with diverse races.

- Stereotyping, prejudice, racism and bigotry are decreased in both students and teachers when they are educated about a variety of cultures.
- Education about achievements of Americans of various ethnic groups can enhance the self-concepts of students who identify with these groups.
- A sense of political efficacy is fostered among students of different ethnic backgrounds through education about the value of ethnic diversity in the American society.
- The ability to perceive and understand multiple cultural and national interpretations of and perspectives on events, values and behavior is developed in students when exposed to various cultures.
- Students' self-concepts and self-understanding are enhanced as they develop pride in their own cultural heritage.
- A sense of uniqueness of one's own culture as a positive characteristic enables students to more easily accept the uniqueness of others' cultures.
- The effects of instructional intervention on student racial, ethnic and gender attitudes are influenced by the nature, structure and direction of the intervention and characteristics of the students, teachers, school environment and local community.
- Cooperative learning leads to more positive racial attitudes for all students, more interracial friendship choices and academic gains for students of color.

- The most effective cooperative learning experiences engage students in common goals and equal status relationships which provide an opportunity for them to become familiar with each other.
- Multicultural materials, vicarious experiences, role playing and simulations can aid in developing better racial attitudes and perceptions.

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The concept that cultural differences enrich, rather than diminish, our society is increasingly being acknowledged. It is now recognized that it is the suppression of cultures that weakens our society. The implementation of multicultural education is an effort to expose students to plurality in a characteristically monocultural learning environment. As practiced in the United States, multicultural education takes on a variety of forms and can have an impact on every aspect of a school's operation including staffing, curriculum, tracking, testing, pedagogy, disciplinary policies, student involvement and parent/community involvement. The most notable classifications of multicultural education were developed by James A. Banks, Christine E. Sleeter and Carl A. Grant.

Banks considers the breadth of multicultural education to be the source of profound change in the educational system. He describes the dimensions of multicultural education in five

overlapping areas: (1) content integration, (2) knowledge construction, (3) equity pedagogy, (4) prejudice reduction and (5) an empowering school culture. Content integration is the incorporation of materials, concepts and values from an assortment of cultures during instruction. Knowledge construction is the awareness that all knowledge is constructed socially. By being created in the minds of human beings, the ideas that shape a society change regularly and knowledge can be challenged. Knowledge construction is therefore the primary facet of multicultural education in that educators must reconstruct world views before they are able to effectively teach in a multicultural manner. Equity pedagogy occurs when educators adjust their teaching methods in order to accommodate to and stimulate academic achievement in culturally diverse students. Prejudice reduction involves a shift in attitudes towards racial and ethnic differences. It also embraces the diversity of religions, physical and mental abilities and sexual preferences present in society. An empowering school culture is the dimension of multicultural education that facilitates the other four. In attempting to build an environment that encourages complete development in its students, educators must examine the structures of education that hinder learning and those that empower students and families from diverse backgrounds.

Sleeter and Grant outline five approaches to multicultural education: (1) teaching the culturally different, (2) human relations, (3) single group studies, (4) multicultural education and (5) social reconstructionist. In the teaching the culturally different approach, a focus is placed on raising the academic achievement level of students of diverse cultures through culturally relevant instruction. Those who implement the human relations approach emphasize the commonalities of all people through an understanding of social and cultural

differences. The single group studies approach concentrates on the histories and contemporary issues of oppression of people of color, women, low socioeconomic groups, gays and lesbians.

Advocates of the multicultural education approach incorporate content that values cultural knowledge and differences in order to reflect the ideals of democracy in a pluralistic society. The social reconstructionist approach stresses awareness of oppression and discrimination against different people in society. In application, these classifications are apt to overlap allowing educators to simultaneously utilize multiple approaches.

The classifications of multicultural education developed by Banks, Sleeter and Grant may also broadly be organized by their primary emphasis. Multicultural education programs may be arranged into one of three groups: (1) content-oriented, (2) student-oriented or (3) socially-oriented.

The principal goal of content-oriented programs is to increase students' understanding of various ethnic, cultural and gender groups by including information about them in curricula and educational materials. According to Banks, sophisticated versions of content-oriented programs attempt to develop multicultural content throughout the disciplines, incorporate a variety of different viewpoints and perspectives in the curricula and develop a new standard of curricula by transforming the canon. Within the five approaches outlined by Sleeter and Grant, content-oriented programs are often forms of single-group studies.

Student-oriented programs focus more on increasing the academic achievement of different ethnic, cultural and gender groups even when they do not involve adjustments to be made in the content of the curriculum. Banks identifies four categories within this group: (1) programs that use

research into culturally-based learning styles, (2) bilingual programs built upon the language of various groups, (3) bicultural programs focusing on the culture of different groups and (4) special mathematics and science programs for specific groups. Sleeter and Grant describe student-oriented programs as a means to help culturally or linguistically different students make the transition into the educational mainstream. These programs are not designed to transform the curriculum or the social context of education, but to merely draw upon the diverse linguistic and cultural backgrounds of the student body. With this objective, it is common for student-oriented programs to be viewed as compensatory in nature.

In seeking to reform both education and the cultural and political contexts of education, socially-oriented programs concentrate neither at increasing the body of multicultural knowledge nor at enhancing academic achievement. Rather they endeavor to increase cultural and racial tolerance and reduce bias. Banks associates this category of programs with those that are designed not only to restructure and desegregate schools, but to increase any form of interaction among the races. Sleeter and Grant describe socially-oriented multicultural education programs as those with a focus on human relations, pluralism and cultural equity in the United States as a whole. To reach these goals, such programs may incorporate various approaches that emphasize a critique of racism, sexism and/or other repressive aspects of society; multilingualism; examination of issues from several different cultural viewpoints or preparation for students to become socially-active citizens.

The practice of multicultural education in schools in the United States is often criticized for trivializing the goal of multicultural education. The periodic inclusion of an ethnic hero, holiday or food from outside of the Caucasian American society does not constitute a multicultural



program. As seen from the classifications above, complete and effective implementation of multicultural education requires research, critical thinking and learning about the diverse perspectives in our society from all participants. Multicultural education will vary in every setting to most appropriately meet the needs of the situation. Thus, before commencing a program, it is important for those involved to agree on a specific definition of multicultural education to implement.

## Resources

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When working with students and parents of diverse cultures, there are several guidelines educators should follow. Some recommendations to consider are listed below:

- Learn and understand the developmental patterns of children from diverse cultures.
- Do not regard certain developmental milestones more highly than others.
- Be aware of diverse cultural styles including different meanings of words, gestures and actions.
- Utilize a variety of interactive styles to teach.
- Incorporate content into lessons that is familiar to the students.
- Establish a method of communication with both the student and parents.

- Involve parents in their child's education.
- Send messages home in the parent's native language.
- Write at an appropriate reading level.
- Ask parents to reinforce school expectations at home.
- Provide a generous amount of time for parents to respond.
- Listen to all returned messages with empathy.

### Resources

Bowman, B. T. (1990). *Educating language-minority children*. Retrieved July 25, 2005, from <http://www.ericdigests.org/pre-9214/minority.htm>.

(1991). *Communicating with culturally diverse parents of exceptional children*. Retrieved July 25, 2005, from <http://www.ericdigests.org/pre-9220/diverse.htm>.

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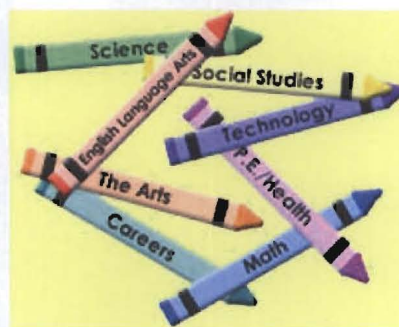
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When transforming a curriculum to support multicultural ideals, there are multiple aspects to consider. Changes not only must be made in the content of the curriculum, but in the attitudes and teaching approaches of educators as well.

The initial step toward a multicultural curriculum transformation is for administrators, educators, community members, and all others involved to reach an agreement on a specific definition of multicultural education. There are numerous definitions of multicultural education; a successful transformation will only occur after all participants decide on the exact approach to implement. While some approaches require minor curricular changes, others call for fully revised programs. James A. Banks, Peggy McIntosh and others developed distinct models of curricular reform to assist schools that are implementing a transformation. The following discusses the five stages of transformation that have been adapted from these models (Gorski, 1995-2005).

At the first stage of multicultural transformation, the curriculum is consistent with standard

curriculums which focus on Eurocentric and male-centric principles. The voices, experiences, contributions and perspectives of non-dominant cultures are fully ignored. Several negative consequences arise from this stage as it is harmful for students from both dominant and non-dominant cultures. During the second stage, educators recognize and honor the differences between cultures as they begin to include information concerning heroes and holidays from various cultures into the curriculum. However, since information about non-dominant cultures is limited to food, dress, music and other tangible cultural objects, the weaknesses of the second stage prevail over the strengths. When educators go beyond trivial information and begin incorporating significant details about non-dominant cultures into the curriculum, they transition into the third stage. While curricula in this stage start to discuss valid issues and concepts, a focus on Eurocentric and male-centric perspectives remains. At the fourth stage, new details and facts regarding all cultures are candidly included in the curriculum. This new information forms a realistic and comprehensive curriculum which allows students to reach new levels of understanding. By the fifth stage, social issues such as racism, sexism and classism are openly discussed in the classroom. The voices, experiences, contributions and perspectives of all cultures are thoroughly addressed and effectively integrated into the curriculum.

In order to facilitate successful multicultural learning, educators must teach from a multicultural perspective as seen at the fifth stage of multicultural transformation. By introducing ethnic and cultural diversity as a positive attribute of society, they are able to foster the development of certain attitudes and values as discussed in the article concerning the benefits of multicultural education.



An educator's behavior in the classroom is a critical element of learning. Consciously and unconsciously, messages are frequently being sent to their students through verbal and non-verbal cues such as tone of voice, facial expressions, gestures and more. Most educators strive to treat all of their students fairly and equitably. While they do not intentionally stereotype or discriminate against their students, it may happen. It is necessary for educators to recognize any subtle or unintentional biases in their behavior; positive changes in the classroom are unable to occur without this ability. Students need to have an appropriate model with tolerant, open-minded and accepting multicultural attitudes before they can exhibit these behaviors themselves.

The transformation into a multicultural curriculum is never the same for every program. While several programs begin at the first stage and work their way up to the fifth stage, others may begin at the second, third or even the fourth stage of transformation. The duration of each stage and the length of time for complete transformation similarly vary between programs. Some programs achieve complete transformation after only a year of revisions. More commonly, however, complete transformation will not occur until several years of adjustment. Yet with effort and support from administration, educators, faculty members, parents and community members, all necessary changes can be made for a successful transformation into a multicultural curriculum.

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Incorporating multicultural literature into curricula offers a supplementary opportunity for students to be exposed to various multicultural concepts promoted within multicultural education. Multicultural literature supports all ideals of multicultural education (such as recognizing and respecting the diversity of people, strengthening the pride in one's own personal heritage, preventing feelings of isolation, emphasizing the importance of building a global community, etc) through strong literary elements that form well-written literature and encourage positive reading experiences.

Literature is one of the most powerful tools in resisting ignorance, fear or mistrust of people that are different and may be regarded as one of the most compelling facets of multicultural education curricula. Studies have shown that the formation of prejudices in students have been reduced due to experiences with high-quality multicultural books. When teaching about ethnic diversity,



students of all groups need books that recognize people from cultural groups that are different from their own.

When selecting multicultural books to include in a curriculum, there are certain criteria that should be considered. In addition to the standards commonly used to evaluate literature, multicultural books should be examined for their emphasis on multicultural themes. The following is a list of criteria that should be taken into consideration when building a collection of multicultural books:

- Books containing racial or cultural stereotyping must be avoided.
- Cultural attitudes, feelings and perspectives must be represented accurately both visually and literally.
- People from within a culture must feel that the book has accurately and honestly reflected their experiences and viewpoints.
- All books should have strong characters that take ethnic and gender diversity into account.
- Books should bring diverse people together in realistic ways and reflect universal similarities of all cultures.
- Misconceptions should be dispelled by truths.
- A balance of diversity, both ethnically and across the genres of children's literature, should exist.

A number of awards have been established to recognize the works of authors and illustrators from various cultures. Nominees and winners of these awards should be noted when building a library of multicultural books. The American

Library Association (ALA) established the Coretta Scott King Award to honor the work of African American authors and illustrators and the Pura Belpré Award to honor the work of Latino/Latina authors and illustrators. The National Council for the Social Studies created the Carter G. Woodson Award to recognize the most distinguished children's books that address topics related to ethnic minorities and race relations. The Council on Interracial Books for Children (CIBC) also acknowledges several outstanding multicultural books written by authors of assorted backgrounds.

Below are some multicultural books that would be excellent additions for any library.

### African American

Fradin, Dennis Brindell and Judith Bloom Fradin.  
*Ida B. Wells: Mother of the Civil Rights Movement*. Clarion Books, 2000. 192p. Ages 10-14.

Hamilton, Virginia. *Time Pieces: The Book of Times*. Scholastic Paperbacks, 2002. 208p. Ages 9-12.

Johnson, Angela. *First Part Last*. Thorndike Press, 2004. 241p. Young Adult.

Meyers, Walter Dean. *Harlem*. Scholastic Books, 1997. 32p. Ages 4-8.

Morrison, Toni. *Remember: The Journey to School Integration*. Houghton Mifflin Company, 2004. 78p. Ages 9-12.

Shange, Ntozake. *Ellington Was Not a Street*. Simon & Schuster, 2004. 40p. Ages 9-12.

Stroud, Bettye. *The Patchwork Path: A Quilt Map to Freedom*. Candlewick Press, 2005. 32p. Ages 4-

### Asian American

Jiang, Ji-Li. *The Magical Monkey King: Mischief in Heaven*. Harper Collins, 2002. 122p. All Ages.

Kadohata, Cynthia. *Kira-Kira*. Atheneum, 2004. 256p. Ages 9-12.

Mochizuki, Ken. *Baseball Saved Us*. Lee & Low Books, 1993. Unpaged. Ages 6-11.

Park, Linda Sue. *A Single Shard*. Clarion Books, 2001. 160p. Ages 10-14.

Say, Allen. *Home of the Brave*. Houghton Mifflin, 2002. 32p. All ages.

Wong, Janet. *Apple Pie 4<sup>th</sup> of July*. Harcourt, 2002. 40p. Ages 3-7.

Yep, Laurence. *When the Circus Came to Town*. Harper Collins, 2002. 113p. Ages 9-12.

### Hispanic American

Alarcon, Francisco X. *Iguanas in the Snow and Other Winter Poems*. Children's Book Press, 2001. 32p. Ages 4-8.

Alvarez, Julia. *Before We Were Free*. Laurel-Leaf Books, 2002. 160p. Young Adult.

Díaz, David. *The Pot That Juan Built*. Lee & Low Books, Inc., 2002. 32p. Ages 6-12.

Martínez, Floyd. *Spirits of the High Mesa*. Arte Público Press, 1997. 192p. Young Adult.

Morales, Yuyi. *Just a Minute: A Trickster Tale and Counting Book*. Chronicle Books, 2003. 36p.

Ages 4-8.

Ryan, Pam Muñoz. *Esperanza Rising*. Scholastic Press, 2000. 262p. Ages 9-12.

Soto, Gary. *Chato and the Party Animals*. Puffin Books, 2000. 32p. Ages 4-8.

### Native American

Bruchac, Joseph. *Navajo Long Walk: The Tragic Story of a Proud People's Forced March from Their Homeland*. National Geographic Society, 2002. 64p. Ages 9-12.

Freedman, Russell. *Indian Chiefs*. Holiday House, 1987. 151p. Ages 9-12.

Goble, Paul. *Mystic Horse*. Harper Collins, 2002. 40p. All Ages.

Joseph, Alvin M. Jr. *500 Nations: An Illustrated History of North American Indians*. Random House, 2002. 480p. All Ages.

Mikaelsen, Ben. *Touching Spirit Bear*. Harper Trophy, 2002. 256p. Ages 9-12.

O'Dell, Scott. *Island of the Blue Dolphins*. Dell Publishing, 1997. 192p. Ages 9-12.

Yolen, Jane. *Encounter*. Harcourt, 1992. 40p. Ages 9-12.

### Religious Cultures

Abell, Chana Byers. *The Children We Remember*. Harper Trophy, 2002. 48p. Ages 9-12. (Judaism)

Ammon, Richard. *An Amish Year*. Atheneum, 2000. 40p. Ages 4-8. (Amish)

Conover, Sarah, Freda Crane and Valerie Wahl. *Ayat Jamilah: Beautiful Signs: A Treasury of Islamic Wisdom for Children and Parents*. Eastern Washington University Press, 2004. 189p. Ages 9-12. (Islam)

Demi. *The Dalai Lama*. Henry Holt and Co., 1998. 32p. Ages 4-8. (Buddhism)

Jendresen, Erik and Joshua M. Greene. *Hanuman*. Tricycle Press, 2004. 40p. Ages 4-8. (Eastern Religions)

Kimmel, Eric. *Gershon's Monster: A Story for the Jewish New Year*. Scholastic Press, 2000. 32p. Ages 4-8. (Judaism)

Sturges, Philemon. *Sacred Places*. Putnam Books, 2000. 38p. Ages 9-12. (Various Religions)

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Pate, G. S. (1988). Research on reducing prejudice. *Social Education* 52, No. 4 (April/May): 287-291.

Steiner, S. F. (2001). *Promoting a global community through multicultural children's literature*. Colorado: Libraries Unlimited, Inc.